[Information on shamanistic "signs" consisting, for example, of muscle twitches in the eye or hand or other reflex movements which manifest themselves in the musculature of the curer and considered as direct signs from the spirits, is filed in category 755 for divinatory practices in curing, or in 787 when non-diagnostic practices are discussed.]

In his opinion, one cannot
/261 cont./
756 learn how to become a shaman; rather, this is a hereditary gift.
● [827] He himself has no son and no pupils.

The tepits Francisco Cuskue is about 40 years old, married, and has four daughters and one son. Two children died. He has neither /262/ cows nor pigs, horses or sheep, and is very poor. He learned from childhood on, for his father and grandfather were also shamans. He wants his son to become a shaman, too. The latter, about ten years old, has not yet begun the apprenticeship, [123] however. In reply to my question as to whether I, too, as a stranger, might become a shaman, he asserted that this would be possible, but said that the training is very long and difficult. One has to learn from childhood on, until one is about 25 or 30 years old. I, in my case, am already too old to begin.

The tepits Cerbeleón Niunda (Ill. 153 /see p. 267/), who lives near the shaman Francisco, is the son of a shaman, was taught by his father, and had the "signs" when he was only ten years old. He is now, as an estimate, 55 years old (no Paez knows how old he is) and had ten children, six of whom died. In the way
756 of possessions he has neither horse nor cow nor sheep. Whereas
312 all Paez divert the mountain brooks so that a small ditch flows past their houses and they always use only flowing water, the shamans Francisco and Cerbeleón have a small joint reservoir below a spring, from which they drink and into which, before drinking, they place one of their medicinal herbs, ỹũ. When questioned, both stated that they did not do this for any special reason and could not find out about anything in the reservoir, neither sickness nor the future.

754 Just as the good shaman was chosen by a vision, this also ap-
787 plies for the evil sorcerer. It is regarded as an omen that he is to become a nyic if, for example, in a dream he sees a bird that in its beak holds a donkey, into whose open mouth flies are
754 crawling, or simply if he dreams about pigs. The prospective nyic may have his vision during the day or at night; it is said that people who are abroad a great deal during the night are the most susceptible to evil sorcery, since at this time they have the

/274 cont./

554 herbs into their drinking-water canal. Now he had given it up,
754 however. To us he seemed to be merely an idle talker; he did
756 not give the impression of actually having received signs or of being serious about the matter, but rather it seemed as though he had merely learned a little by watching his father /275/ and was doing it mechanically without any inner concern. Francisco, too, had a father and grandfather as shaman predecessors. He was likewise rather ignorant, but apparently meant well. He did his best to help people.

756 Martin Chukue was completely absorbed by his calling and
753 duty, and he was well informed, serious, and dignified in his
761 shamanistic work. When the capitan of Calderas died, he was the shaman authorized to act for his residence, and he also conducted the purification ceremony after his burial. Martin explained the cause of death of the capitan as follows: The capitan had to die because the tũs had stolen the taff soul of the capitan. The capitan died with his left leg drawn up. He was very thin when he died, because he had not eaten anything for a long time, for
[755] his taff soul had been stolen five years ago. At that time the sick man began feeling pain, and during the entire time he, Martin, had fought with the tũs, offered him medicines, and tried to appease him.

775 When the ũns soul (ũns also means "heart"!) leaves the body,
[774] then the person is ultimately dead. And, to be sure, ũns leaves
[827] the body by way of the upper arms, lower arms, finger tips. Shortly before it leaves the person, one may still perceive it very faintly as a pulse beat, and when the pulse beat ceases altogether, the ũns has left the body and immediately goes to heaven. No one could tell me exactly in what form it goes to heaven. In heaven, however, it again has the normal human appearance.
[755] When children are ill, wool threads are put around their wrists
[774] and ankles and drawn tightly in order to prevent the escape of the ũns, or at least to make it more difficult.

1: Nachtigall--229 E-5 (1952-1953) 1955 SC15 Paez SC15

/304 cont./

* 539

15. Encounters with the Pijao

A young Paez man was working for a rich landowner on the latter's finca in the Cauca Valley somewhere near Popayán. The finca was near the mountain. One day he went into the mountains, since his master had a great deal of livestock. On the way he met a Pijao woman, who seized him and carried him to her house in order to devour him. There were many people in her house, and since she wanted to devour him by herself and not share him with the many other Pijao, /305/ she put him in a large pot. This was as large as a Paez house. She left him there for three days. During this time the Pijao drank, ate, and danced. After three days, when all the Pijao were tired and asleep, the woman went into the mountains to fetch wood and make a fire, in order to roast the Paez youth. The latter meanwhile looked out from the vessel in which he was imprisoned and saw two small girls on the hearth stones, the daughters of the woman. They were playing and nudging the drunken and sleeping Pijao, who, however, did not stir. The youth quickly climbed out of his vessel, took a piece of wood, and killed the two girls. He quickly seized a pot of gold and ran away.

When the woman returned to her house with sufficient wood, she found her two children dead. She immediately looked into the pot, and when she did not find the Paez youth in it, she became furious and quickly ran after him. The young man ran for three hours until he met a large herd of cattle belonging to his master, where he hid in the midst of the cattle. The woman tried to pursue him, but since she smelled so badly the cattle became wild, roared and kicked the woman, and she was unable to seize the youth. (The narrator explained that the Pijao are not familiar with cattle and dogs. If a dog and a Pijao meet, the dog kills the Pijao on the spot. The Pijao smell entirely different from other human beings, somewhat like animals.) Now, when the woman was unable to reach the Paez, she was furious and scratched her head with its many lice. But she could do nothing, and she therefore went back to her house and devoured her own two dead children.

[827]

/183 cont./

342 and blows them into the air; with a small staff called "tama"
756 he cleaves the air in such a way that sometimes he appears to
787 be frightening away the spirits, sometimes threatening them,
[823] and sometimes clubbing them. If the signs (reflex movements)
are felt on the right side, the site is favorable; the opposite
denotes that the site is uninhabitable. The spirits are angry,
[761] or there are Pijao bones and gold at the site. If the site has
not been selected by the medicine man, even if the house is a
handsome one it cannot be occupied, for its occupants would
die, beginning with the children, continuing with the mother,
342 and ending with the father. The medicine man himself pro-
756 hibits people from living in a house built without the fulfill-
ment of this requisite. The medicine man's dictum is rewarded
with a bottle of aguardiente, an egg (1) of coca, tobacco, a

[804]

1. A measure of weight equivalent to the weight of a hen's egg.

calabash of chicha, and usually a meal with chicken. /184/
[789] This is called "care" /cuido/. When the house is finished,
the medicine man will place special remedies at the ridgepole
to prevent the ghosts or echi from descending by way of it or
from being angered.

342 Then come the mingas /communal work-parties/. A house
476 is built with the help of others. The people are invited, in-
cluding the medicine man himself, who goes to work as a
laborer. The work is organized. First, they go to the wood-
land for wood; under the influence of the guarapo, voices re-
sound, loud laughter is heard, and the deep sound of the
"cacho" /horn/ rumbles in the montañas, multiplied by its
342 echoes. Soon they report to the man in charge. They level
335 out the ground that will serve as the house floor; they dig holes
476 in which to sink the posts approximately two meters apart,
driven in solidly, and tied at the top to cross-pieces with lianas
(guák); the posts outline the shape of the house, and they will

4:Bernal Villa--41 E-5 (1952-1953) 1953 SC15 Paez SC15

/208 cont./

231 After skinning it, they quarter it following a definite
796 sequence: the lower part of the hind legs (chinda), the lower
192 part of the front legs (kuse), the upper part of the hind legs (himbé), the upper part of the front legs (pala), the tail (mens), the flesh of the neck (chikichichi), the fat (sepo), upper intestine (chunchullo), lower intestine (meto), stomach (tuchi), /209/ trachea (pechita), lungs (mechto), heart (ús), liver [827] (mechi), the gall (muahi), pancreas (shape)... They are familiar with most of the organs and their names, but not with their specific physiology.

262 Some of the pieces of meat go directly into the pan of
796 "mute," which is boiling and which the workers will eat for
252 lunch; others, to the barbecue where they will get the smoke from the kitchen.

Inside the house, in the fiuhne wala, the women grind shelled maize on two metates to make maize griddlecakes. With maize flour and water they make a dough which various women shape with their hands into circular form. In a separate kitchen, two women and two men are busy roasting them. First they let them harden on a piece of broken earthenware and then complete the cooking in the embers of the hearth. An elderly man gathers those that are cooked into a bag. Another one occupies himself with singing religious songs and praying. The maize griddlecakes are used to take care of the albacero on the following day.

796 This work is performed enthusiastically by the women.
[462] --The days of the fiesta are for talking, says one woman.
[829] --One can live through life only by getting drunk, says
[273] another.

/224 cont./

At the edge of the lagoon the teacher-curer digs a hole, over which, and from the end of the tama, he suspends the camarico. Thunder requests from the pupil 10, 20, or 30 centavos, coins which he deposits in the hole. Then, he lowers the pouch and covers the hole with stones and earth. The curer bathes the pupil with shu and shulape (1). Thunder

1. 1. Cf. below, "Remedies" /see pp. 22ff./.

draws near to receive other gifts which he requests by means of the signs, to state that the youth may learn how to cure, to prohibit him emphatically from collecting bad remedies (for sorcery), and to request him to be charitable with people. Last of all, he orders him to return home.

At the teacher's home, chicha and aguardiente are drunk, and meat is eaten with stew. Then the teacher presents remedies to the pupil and tells him that henceforth he will merely need to apply them, warning about the patients who are in a very serious condition, but with the help of God he should try to cure them.

The signs. The signs are reflex movements which manifest themselves in the musculature of the curer. "They are like a circulation" -- says one té eu, "as when a person's muscle twitches in the eye or hand. The interpretation of these signs is done by the curer."

The signs come from Thunder or the Ghost. That is to say, from assisting spirits. There are also those who say that they come from God.

The signs are fundamental, basic in Paez medicine. Without them there cannot be curers, and there cannot be a curer who does not know how to interpret the signs. It is useless to have knowledge of the medicinal value of the plants. The curer is no more than an intermediary, a spokesman for

/224 cont./

the assisting spirit. It is not enough to know whether certain medicines correspond to certain signs. The tẽ eu must /225/ divine which remedies will be useful for the particular case. This is why the curer always carries a pouch with all the known remedies. He takes one out and consults. If the signs do not circulate, the remedy is useless; he takes out another and waits. When they are felt insistently, then the remedy is appropriate. Since the signs are given by the assisting spirit, it is he who cures.

The signs may contribute to the discovery of a vocation. If a man engaged in a manual task that does not imply motion (the making of firecrackers, plates for cooking, pottery) suddenly feels the movement of the signs, he must seek out a teacher so that he will instruct him in the art of curing. He cannot disobey them or he would go mad.

Even the curers themselves must practice the signs. If, for example, no sick clients have come for two days, the tẽ eu must visit his Kachí (2) and practice the signs; otherwise,

2. See below, "Divination sites" /see p. 9/.

they may drive him insane. For this reason, the curer must practice his profession until old age begins. Old men lose the signs because they cannot travel to go to the Kachí and practice the signs.

All the informants affirm that signs on the left side signify something bad, while those on the right indicate something good. As a rule, the signs that are given in a certain part of the body have a specific meaning. Minor differences may be noted in the information provided by the curers, but they are matters of form rather than substance. There follows a table of the symbolism of the signs, gathered from many profane informants and curers from the Parcialidades of Santa Rosa, Calderas, Togoima, Avisame, and San Andrés.

/225 cont./

Right:
The signs go down the leg: death; remedies will not help.
The signs climb up the foot and the tibia: a member of the family will die and go to heaven.
The signs go up the outer edge of the foot to above the ankle: the remedies will work.
The signs occur between the ankle and the heel and cross to the same spot on the

/226/

left side: contest between the Té eu and the sorcerer.
Calf (gemelluses): visit of a good woman; the ghost comes singing to point out the remedies.
Calf (outer part of the digits): a good man is coming to visit the curer.
Kneecap, signs that go down: a person will die from the rainbow or ghost.
Thigh: the signs run to the back of the knee and disappear: the person will die; fierce pest; serious matter.
Signs go down from the groin to the foot: the

Left:
The signs go along the inner side of the foot: the pest is leaving; the patient is encouraged.
The signs go up the outer side of the foot: the sorcerer wins; the patient dies.
The signs go up from the ankle to the back of the knee: sorcery; field has a spell on it.
These same signs, but first

occurring on the right and immediately passing to the left: rainbow /arco/ and Ghost.
Calf (gemelluses): a sorceress is coming to visit the curer.
Calf (extending from the digits): a sorcerer is coming to visit the curer.
Kneecap: fear of the sorcerer because he is winning over the Té eu; fear, fright, disaster.
Thigh, the signs go down: bad person going by.
Rib (the tenth): bad person is coming.
Back of the hand: the ghost does not accept the remedies because they are incomplete.
Palm of the hand: the person

* /226 cont./

758 Right:
787 wife is about to
827 menstruate.
755 Rib (the tenth): the patient will die at once; sting of Kallumb.
The signs occur between the ring finger and heart: on the following day the person will wield a shovel to bury a dead person.
Palm of the hand: the person will receive a present; greeting from the ghost; improvement of the pest.
Palm of the hand and passes to the throat: Pijao "dirt."
Thumb and palm of the hand (simian line): the lost animal will appear, the signs indicate that it will be caught.
Biceps: a good person will ask him to be godfather at a baptism.
The signs go from the ear to the shoulder: the ears will be cut off.
Cheekbone to the outer corner of the eye: the patient will improve; the stolen animal will appear.
Eye and down the nose: wake.

Left:
will die of the pest; the ghost did not accept remedies.

Signs in the arm: the echi is coming.
Biceps: same meaning as for the right side.
Wrist: someone will give a scare; he will be caught.
Shoulder and they make an arc through the chest: rainbow.
Cheekbone to the outer corner of the eye: the stolen animal was eaten.
Eye and down the nose: a dead person.

/226 cont./

756 When the signs occur at the vertex (crown), the sorcerer
787 is about to send the pest, and if they go from the vertex to
827 the left hand, the person is under a spell.
755 If the signs occur in the gluteal muscles, an animal be-
longing to the person has died and the vultures are eating it.
756 In this way, the curers can know the nature of the illness
755 /227/ and the type of remedies required. To determine the
spell and the sorcerer responsible,

To divine whether a stolen object can be recovered or not, and who the thieves are. To learn whether a patient will improve or die. To detect the presence of the Ghost, Rainbow, and Echi. To know in advance about the visits of good or bad persons.

The act of perceiving the signs is called to divine or "to [273] think." Every patient must always bring tobacco, aguardiente, [276] and coca. The aguardiente is used to call Thunder, Ghost and Echi and to satisfy them. The chewed coca and tobacco serve to make the signs circulate.

Divination sites. The té eu has a special divination site called Kachí. In it he practices the signs and perceives them [263] when he has a patient to cure. If the patient is not in serious condition and comes in person to the house of the curer, then he can divine on its ground, even though there is the obstacle of the presence there of ají and salt, articles that Thunder does not like. The treatment, that is to say, the perception of signs and the corresponding cleansing, is carried out at night, at two or three in the morning.

If the patient is in very serious condition, the té eu must go to a site where he will not be disturbed by the shouting of people, the barking of dogs, or the noises of animals. A site almost completely removed from human haunts, such as a bog or a lagoon. He takes with him two or three hairs taken from the crown of each member of the family present, with which he makes a ball that he places amidst the shu /Sphagnum/.

/227 cont./

755 *756 He remains at the site for about an hour. When the signs give hope, he leaves the hair and returns to the patient's house.

In treatments of this type, the curer requires as "provisions" a pig, a sheep, and chicha.

*755 756 273 276 [804] Divining the illness. The curer demands from his clients two eggs (3) of coca, two cigars, and half a liter of aguardiente.

3. One egg of coca is equivalent to the weight of a hen's egg.

He gathers the coca into a medium-sized pouch with great scrupulousness, for he does not allow a single leaf to be lost. He transfers the aguardiente to a bottle of his own and puts it in the same pouch with the coca, likewise the cigars. The divination is performed under the eaves of his house at 8:00 P.M.

/228/ He places the patient on his right, seated on a pango pil (bench); the pouches of remedies are placed on his left, along with the pouch containing the coca and aguardiente received from the patient.

*755 756 He begins by making two bundles of remedies with yacuma blanca, ul hiñ, fiundayuskei, bitopiskue, and chandur de castilla (4). Each remedy is extracted patiently from his pouch,

4. Cf. below, "Remedies" /see pp. 22ff./.

which contains all the remedies needed for his treatments, but not in any specific order. He does not show anxiety or haste; he observes great moderation. When he takes out the remedy, before placing it on the maize husk that will serve as wrapping for the bundle, he quickly passes it around his body, beginning at the right foot, going up this side to the crown of the head, and ending on the left side, in order to stimulate the blood so that the signs will circulate. As soon as he has finished passing it, the signs may go from the right calf upward,

● [827]

/228 cont./

755 indicating hope, for if they moved from the knee to the foot,
756 there would be no need to receive the coca, tobacco, or
[127] aguardiente, for the patient would be incurable. Only when the signs are favorable does he take the pouch of remedies received from the patient and pass it around in the same way as he did the remedies, with the aim of invoking Thunder and Kallumb, his helpers.

75 He orders the patient to chew the bundle of remedies which he presented to him not long before. He picks up the tama (5) in his hands and blows on it with the remedies that he

5. Cf. below, "The tama"
/see pp. 17-18/.

is chewing, which are the same as those chewed by the patient, for the purpose of preventing the ptans ("dirt") sent by the
[276] sorcerers from surprising the curer and killing him. In this case he may have the mambe /lime to be chewed with coca, or the coca and lime together/ in his hand and nevertheless remain motionless, with blood running from his mouth. Then, and to the front, he drives in the tama, the weapon of Thunder, to indicate to him that he is not working in a bad way, but in such a way and in accordance with his teachings. Before putting it in the ground, he passes it around his body so that it will protect him from the ptans.

[924] Next to the tama he puts the bottle of aguardiente, which
[763] he places a sprig of chayuts; if it remains upright and floats, it is a good sign, while if it tilts and sinks to the bottom, it is an omen of death. On top of the bottle he puts a small calabash to measure the aguardiente, in which is also put a sprig /229/ of chayuts; it serves as a preventive, for it prevents the ptans from catching the curer unprepared and killing him.

[276] Then he puts a handful of coca in his mouth and begins to chew; he remains seated, almost motionless, his eyes trained on the room and on the tama, attentive to the slightest motion;